

Message Text

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17

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

CU-02 /062 W

----- 113919

R 121818Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8787

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO

AMCONSUL ZURICH

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR, FR

SUBJECT: SOVIET EMBASSY PROTESTS SOLZHENYTSIN'S APPEAR-
ANCE ON FRENCH TV

1. SUMMARY: IN WIDELY PUBLICIZED COMMUNIQUE MARCH 10
SOVIET EMBASSY HERE EXPRESSED ITS "INDIGNATION" OVER
SOLZHENYTSIN'S APPEARANCE ON A PRIME-TIME TV PROGRAM
FOLLOWING A SHOWING OF THE FILM "ONE DAY IN THE LIFE OF
IVAN DENISOVITCH." END SUMMARY

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2. DURING HIS APPEARANCE, WHICH HAD UNUSUALLY LARGE TV

AUDIENCE AND MADE HEADLINE NEWS IN PRESS, SOLZHENYTSIN ANSWERED LARGE NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ABOUT SOVIET POLITICAL PRISON SYSTEM IN PARTICULAR AND THE USSR AND COMMUNIST SYSTEM IN GENERAL IN MEASURED, AUTHORITATIVE AND THEREFORE MORE EFFECTIVE TERMS THAN DURING EARLIER APPEARANCES IN WEST. SOLZHENYTSIN ALSO FORCEFULLY REITERATED HIS, BY NOW WELL KNOWN, VIEWS ON DETENTE AND THE DECLINE OF THE WEST. AMONG VENERABLE LOCAL INSTITUTIONS TO FEEL HIS BARBS WAS LE MONDE WITH WHICH HE HAS BEEN FEUDING FOR SEVERAL WEEKS OVER AN INCORRECT LE MONDE ARTICLE CLAIMING THAT HE INTENDED TO VISIT CHILE.

3. THE SOVIET EMBASSY'S PROTEST CALLED SOLZHENYTSIN AN ENEMY OF DETENTE AND SUPPORTER OF THE COLD WAR, WHO INTERFERES DIRECTLY IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE USSR. THE FACT, THE STATEMENT CONTINUED, THAT THE MANAGEMENT OF FRENCH TELEVISION HAS GIVEN HIM THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPREAD HEINOUS CALUMNIES AGAINST THE USSR IS DIFFICULT TO RECONCILE WITH THE TASKS WHICH THE SOVIET AND FRENCH GOVERNMENTS HAVE SET THEMSELVES TO DEEPEN MUTUAL FRIENDSHIP AND RESPECT AND TO IMPROVE BILATERAL RELATIONS.

4. ACCORDING TO LE MONDE SOVIET EMBASSY HAD IN FACT FORMALLY OBJECTED TO SOLZHENYTSIN'S PROPOSED APPEARANCE IN DEMARCHE ON QUAI'S CULTURAL SECTION ON MARCH 5. DECISION WAS EVIDENTLY TAKEN IN SUBSEQUENT DAYS TO GO AHEAD ANYWAY, IN SPITE OF ADDITIONAL FACTS THAT PROGRAM TOOK PLACE JUST BEFORE SECOND ROUND CANTONAL ELECTIONS AND ON EVE QUAI SEC GEN DE COURCEL'S CURRENT VISIT TO MOSCOW.

5. COMMENT: SOVIET PROTEST HAS PROBABLY ONLY SERVED TO UNDERLINE IN FRENCH MINDS SOVIET SENSITIVITY TO SOLZHENYTSIN'S CENTRAL MESSAGE ABOUT SOVIET REPRESSIVE METHODS. FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT WAS ONLY MAJOR FIGURE TO PICK OCCASION TO BROADEN ISSUE A LITTLE BY NOTING THAT "THERE ARE VARIOUS PEOPLE HERE AND THERE WHO HAVE BEEN OCCUPYING THEMSELVES TOO MUCH LATELY WITH FRANCE'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS."

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